



## [Update from U.S. Senator John Cornyn](#)

**November 2004**

This month, record numbers of Americans went to the polls to cast their vote. I am encouraged by the results. The American people have sent a message, and Washington must hear it loud and clear. George W. Bush became the first President in 16 years to win a majority of the popular vote, receiving more votes than any candidate in history. He also became the first President to lead his party to consecutive gains in the House and Senate since Franklin D. Roosevelt. Republicans in the Senate will now have a majority of 55 members. This will allow us to increase our majority on committees as well, and I'm encouraged that the results will mean more accomplishments for the American people.

As we move forward in the next session of Congress, I remain committed to being a strong voice for Texas. Now that the voters have spoken, I am hopeful that we will be able to make bipartisan advances on key pieces of legislation. I believe that, working together, we can confirm many of the President's honorable judicial nominees; we can make tax relief permanent; we can secure Social Security for the future; and we can achieve real medical liability reform. I want you to know that I welcome your thoughts and your support during these coming months and years, as we face these critical issues together.

### **Economy: 12 Consecutive Quarters of Growth**

During the month of October, 337,000 new payroll jobs were created nationwide. Since August 2003, the economy added 2.3 million new payroll jobs, marking 14 consecutive months of increases. The economy in Texas continues to grow steadily as well. Job growth has been consistent, and the unemployment rate in Texas has dropped from 6.0 percent in April to 5.5 percent in September.

Meanwhile, there are other good signs that the national economy is strong and growing stronger. The Bureau of Economic Analysis announced recently that America's gross domestic product grew at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 3.7 percent during the third quarter of 2004. Consumer spending also increased by 4.6 percent, and business investment displayed a robust 11.7 percent growth rate. Over the past year, average quarterly growth was nearly 4 percent. Most importantly, our economy has been expanding for 12 consecutive quarters.

It is clear that the sound economic policies of this administration and Congress have produced superior results. I hope that the most recent tax relief package, the Working Families Tax Relief Act of 2004, will continue the nation on a sound path of growth and recovery. We continue to work in the Senate to pass legislation that will help us compete in the global economy — including implementing pro-growth tax policies, reducing the size and scope of government regulation, lowering health care costs, and restraining government spending.

### **Border Issues: Ensuring Our Homeland Security**

I was honored to address a [Smart Borders Conference](#) regarding the US-VISIT program in October. Starting this month, land ports will begin testing US-VISIT entry procedures. I am pleased by the progress that's been made under Department of Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge's leadership; even at this early point, US-VISIT is working. Since the rollout of our pilot program, more than 10 million foreign visitors have been processed. We have arrested or denied admission to nearly 300 criminals or immigration law violators— including people convicted of rape, drug trafficking, armed robbery, and manslaughter as well as federal penitentiary escapees, numerous immigration violators, and those attempting visa fraud.

I am personally committed to an entry-exit system that protects the American people, while allowing for legitimate traffic and trade along our borders. Our duty is to make border-crossing policy that is quick, safe, and efficient for those who follow our laws — but also to form a solid barrier against those who violate them or seek to do us harm.

I believe that the US-VISIT program is essential to this goal. It provides a continuum of security measures that will help us ensure that those who follow immigration law will benefit from easier travel. However, it will dramatically improve our ability to detect those who violate it.

For more information click here:

<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/record.cfm?id=227855>

**Texas Issues: Leadership on Hispanic Affairs Task Force**

In October, I proudly took the position of Vice Chairman of the U.S. Senate Republican Conference [Task Force on Hispanic Affairs](#). Working alongside the Chairman of the task force, Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah, I will continue to address the issues important to the Hispanic community.

This means I will work hard for the Hispanic community by securing the homeland and helping create good jobs, better health care, and quality education — as well as ensuring that all Texans have the opportunity to achieve the American dream.

For more information click here:

<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/record.cfm?id=227168>

**Iraq: We Must Finish the Job**

The Senate Armed Services Committee last month received [the report of chief U.S. arms inspector](#), Charles Duelfer, indicating that Saddam Hussein had been a growing threat to the region and the world. He violated numerous UN resolutions and disregarded international sanctions, international law, and the demands of UN weapons inspectors. Fortunately, Saddam Hussein is no longer flouting the international community or continuing to inflict mass destruction, terrorist organizations, and ongoing genocide.

I am dismayed by the unmistakably partisan report —issued 13 days before the election—by committee Democrats concerning pre-war intelligence. Regardless of political party, we ought to agree that the world is better off with Hussein in jail instead of a palace. The truth is not a partisan matter; after all, according to 9/11 Commission co-chairman Thomas Kean, former President Clinton told the Commission that he believed with “absolute certainty” Iraq provided al Qaeda with weapons of mass destruction expertise and technology in the 1990s.

We will not allow politics to make us forget Saddam Hussein’s brutality, menacing ambition, or the threat he posed to the region and the world. Our duty is to support the efforts of brave men and women serving in Iraq, and we must finish the job—not play politics with it.

For more information click here:

<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/record.cfm?id=227165>

**Come See Me**

If you’re traveling to Washington for business or pleasure, I would greatly appreciate the chance to say hello while you’re here. I have an open house in my office, Hart Senate Office Building, Room 625, from 9:00 to 9:30 a.m. every Tuesday while Congress is in session, so I can greet and talk with Texans who are here. Please call Denise Pleasant in my office at (202) 224-2934 to let me know you’ll be coming.

**Special Announcement: Presidential Inauguration Information**

The 55th Inauguration of the President of the United States will be held on January 20, 2005. If you would like to attend or participate in the ceremonies please visit the [website](#) I’ve set up to provide information for constituents:

For more information click here:

<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/contact/inauguration.html>

Best regards,

Senator John Cornyn